



Biodiversity Duty Reporting 2025

Section 1: Policies, objectives, and actions

Policies, strategies, and objectives

Nottingham City Council has several existing policies and strategies in place that demonstrate consideration for biodiversity. These policies and strategies will continue to meet biodiversity duty over their plan periods, and into the future as they are reviewed and updated.

The Local Plan

The Nottingham City Local Plan Part 1: Aligned Core Strategies 2014 (Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough, Nottingham City) covers the plan period to 2028. This document comprises a set of aligned principles and policies that these boroughs have collectively adopted/are working towards, in-line with the wider goals of Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire. Two policies link directly to the environment. [The Adopted Local Plan - Nottingham City Council](#)

Policy 16: Green Infrastructure, Parks, and Open Space is a strategic approach to the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure assets and corridors within Nottinghamshire. This policy emphasises the need for promoting accessibility to green space as well as the enhancement of these spaces where developments may have negative impact, including the enforcement of suitable mitigation/compensation strategies where developments cannot avoid this.

Policy 17: Biodiversity is a policy that specifically references the requirement to increase biodiversity over the plan period through restoration, protection, expansion, and enhancement of existing areas of biodiversity interest, and by avoiding fragmentation of the green infrastructure network. This policy feeds into planning and developments, requiring suitably worded planning conditions to ensure that biodiversity features are included in developments, and that existing/created habitats are appropriately managed and maintained over the long-term.

The Nottingham City Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies Development Plan 2020 contains a section dedicated to the environment, with several policies that refer to the protection, enhancement, and avoidance of loss of biodiversity and green spaces. [The Adopted Local Plan - Nottingham City Council](#)

Policy EN1: Development of Open Space seeks to protect the network of open and green spaces across the city. The Open Space Network (OSN) includes parks, public gardens, natural and semi-natural greenspaces such as woodland, golf courses, community growing spaces,



cemeteries, and play areas, as well as members only accessed or private institutional grounds, sports grounds, and allotments. Smaller sites (<0.5ha) that are not mapped as part of this network are still protected by policy EN1 as they make a valuable contribution to the OSN.

Policy EN2: Open Space in New Development seeks developer contributions towards the enhancement of existing open space, or the provision of additional open space on site or within the locality as a result of developments. This includes informal areas for biodiversity that are also publicly accessible, where appropriate.

Policy EN5: Development Adjacent to Waterways expects developments next to waterways to protect, maintain, and enhance the nature conservation of these spaces, as they are important, established habitats and act as wildlife corridors.

Policy EN6: Biodiversity exists in addition to Policy 17 of the Core Strategy (which aims to increase biodiversity). EN6 acts to protect biodiversity from development, only permitting this where (i) its justification clearly outweighs the nature conservation value of the site (in the case of Sites of Special Scientific Interest), (ii) its justification clearly outweighs the need to safeguard nature conservation (in the case of priority/protected habitats, sites supporting priority/protected species, Local Geological Sites, and Local Nature Reserves), (iii) its justification clearly outweighs any harm caused by the development and that adequate mitigation measures are put in place (in the case of non-designated sites and wildlife corridors).

Policy EN7: Trees seeks to protect trees, veteran trees, and ancient woodland. Any developments that will have an adverse impact on trees will only be granted where high value trees are retained and adequately protected. Development that will result in the loss of irreplaceable habitat, such as ancient woodland, will be refused unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and suitable compensation strategies exist. Nottingham City Council recognises the importance of trees and additionally has an Urban Forest Strategy (2013) that supports the City Council's wider strategic priorities for Nottingham, and a Supplementary Planning Guidance Document: Trees on Development Sites (2012) to guide developers on City Council tree policy and what is required of them when seeking planning permission for developments that may affect trees. These documents are currently under review, with an updated Tree Service Policy recently produced to underpin the strategy.

As part of the Local Plan, Nottingham City Council is also committed to reducing its carbon footprint.

[The Greener, Healthier, Happier Strategy](#)

The Greener, Healthier, Happier Strategy (GHH) was adopted by the Council in October 2024 earlier this year, succeeding the 'Breathing Space' strategy that was in place between 2010 and 2020. GHH was commissioned as part of the Future Parks Accelerator and aims to create



a 25-year sustainable plan for Nottingham's green spaces, with focus on increasing accessibility. Four aims build the foundation of the strategy:

1. Greener, connected neighbourhoods. Extend the benefits provided by the environment across the whole city, by creating green networks across Nottingham, including streets, transport corridors, and the wider public realm.
2. Resilient and climate positive places. Recognise that our greenspaces play a critical role in addressing some of the impacts of climate change, as well as their importance for biodiversity.
3. An activated and healthy, sustainable city. Continue to provide high quality greenspaces and connect these with greener corridors to encourage active lifestyles and nature connectedness for wellbeing.
4. Creating nature-rich, beautiful spaces for people. Ensure that the correct pathways for the development of our greenspaces are in place, to provide better places for people to enjoy and be involved in.

There are also four values reflected in the strategy:

1. To protect: a commitment to preserving all green spaces in our city, to invest in the future quality of these spaces by contributing to their enrichment, and to leave a lasting legacy for future generations.
2. To be involved: to work to enhance and generate value for our green spaces through the support of local businesses, communities, and volunteers.
3. To be connected: a belief in a sense of place for everyone, and to inform and educate in order to protect and manage our impact on the natural environment.
4. To be accessible: a desire for our green spaces to be used positively and more frequently, and a recognition that we need to improve our green spaces to deliver welcoming, safer, and more attractive sites. [greener-healthier-happier-nottingham-strategy-report-23524-compressed.pdf](#)

[Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document](#)

This document, published in 2020, is available for developers to read and understand why biodiversity is important and what is expected of developments in relation to ecology e.g., when an ecological assessment is required as part of a planning application, and how wildlife legislation should be followed. Additional and updated biodiversity information will be provided within an informal guidance document and/or web-based applicant support and internal socialisation. [biodiversity-spd.pdf](#)

[Design Quality Framework](#)

The Design Quality Framework is a series of Design Coding Criteria, Best Practice Guidance, and advice to help developers make better design choices and decisions around their



projects, in-line with the National Design Guide and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. There are three codes in place for nature:

N1.1 – Existing natural assets are retained, protected, and made an integral part of the development design e.g., trees.

N1.2 – Natural water management principles are integrated into the design for wellbeing and mindfulness.

N1.3 – Landscape proposals ensure that every plant is in healthy soil and an optimum location for growth.

Actions undertaken to comply with Biodiversity Duty

In addition to the biodiversity related policies and strategies that are in place, the following set of actions have been undertaken that benefit Nottingham's wildlife, habitats, and green/open spaces. A formalised set of objectives and future actions are laid out in Section 2 for the next reporting period.

Protected sites network

Across Nottingham, there are many protected sites that primarily serve a biodiversity purpose. As of 2024/25, there are 14 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) totalling 302.97ha and 3 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Based on data taken from March 31st 2025, there are 52 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) in the city bounds (some of these sites have dual status as LNR or SSSI). Of the 52 LWS, 31 are currently under positive conservation management (59.6%), as well as 100% of the LNR and SSSI. In addition to this, four sites that are not currently identified as having statutory or non-statutory status are also managed positively for conservation.

Biodiversity and habitat improvements

Habitat improvement works have taken place across many of the publicly accessible green spaces in the city, not just those dedicated as nature sites e.g., parks and cemeteries. The biggest biodiversity success for Nottingham City has been the creation of The Green Heart (completed in August 2024), a city centre park that has seen a 438% increase in biodiversity net gain. A separate excel spreadsheet is provided alongside this report which contains information on each of these works since June 2023.

Improvements to biodiversity monitoring and knowledge

Several reports have been commissioned to increase knowledge of biodiversity across the city.

The Open and Green Space Quality Audit (2021) was completed by LUC to inform the new strategic framework for managing open and green spaces in Nottingham City. This framework dates until 2050 and will highlight the benefits that are provided by open spaces, including



climate change adaptation and biodiversity enhancement. [nottingham-city-open-and-green-space-quality-audit-march-2021.pdf](#)

In August 2021, Ecosulis was commissioned to carry out a Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping exercise that included both a report and GIS modelling of biodiversity opportunities across Nottingham. This report was published in 2022 and functions to allow detailed analysis of the natural resources, habitat networks, tree stock, and ecosystem services across the city. [Mapping Natural Capital for Nottingham City Council](#)

A report by FPCR Environment and Design Ltd. was prepared on behalf of the Council to assess BNG unit demand and funding provision for habitat creation/enhancement across the city. The four main objectives of this report were (i) to investigate if current and future developments are capable of producing sufficient BNG unit demand to facilitate Local Authority-administered habitat banks, (ii) to analyse landholdings across the Council and identify suitable locations for BNG delivery sites, (iii) to produce a costing framework for BNG delivery and establish resource demand, (iv) identify the natural capital benefits of the Council becoming a unit provider.

In addition, two knowledge building/monitoring exercises are being undertaken internally:

1. The Council mapping system for the Open Space Network is currently under review to update and refine the data that feeds into this GIS modelling.
2. Nottingham conservation sites are also currently under review. We are looking into nature priorities in more detail for all natural and semi-natural sites, with the aim to update management plans and create new plans for those that are not currently under positive management.

[Workforce development](#)

Nottingham City Council was placed under s.114 for the financial year 2023/24. This financial position led to an increase in vacancies in the Greenspace and Natural Environment Department (GNED) and a reduced ability to work above and beyond statutory duty. In recognition of this, as well as the implementation of The Environment Act 2021, funding has been secured to readdress previously vacant roles and fill these, bolstering resource for nature recovery, biodiversity, and greenspace management. Recruitment is currently underway, with roles being filled from November 2025.

[Local Nature Recovery Strategy \(LNRS\)](#)

Nottinghamshire County Council have led on the development of the LNRS as a responsible authority with Nottingham City Council as a supporting authority contributing to the mapping and measures establishment process. Nottingham City Council has also been part of the LNRS Working Group and will continue to participate in future meetings that will enable the delivery and implementation of the strategy.



The strategy has recently been published [Notts Nature Recovery](#).

Preparation for BNG

With Biodiversity Net Gain legislation coming into effect in February 2024, Nottingham City Council followed the Planning Advisory Service 'BNG Readiness Checklist' – a tool set up to help local authorities prepare for BNG requirements. [Biodiversity Net Gain Readiness Checklist for Local Authorities | Local Government Association](#).



Section 2: Future Actions

Objective	Achieved in the first reporting period	To be achieved in reporting period 2026
1. Positively manage Council owned land to enhance, protect, restore, and expand biodiversity	• Numerous small-scale and large-scale habitat improvement projects e.g., tree planting (see attached spreadsheet for details). • Set-up the Nottingham Bee Friendly campaign, enabling relaxed mowing across the city for the benefit of pollinators. • Positive management of 100% of LNR and SSSI sites, in addition to 59.6% of LWS. • Annual management of our largest meadow sites. • Successful funding bid alongside Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust to improve 2 wildlife sites as part of the Species Survival Fund: Thriving in a Wilder Trent. • A review of the use of pesticides in Sherwood as part of WildNG.	• Continue to invest in small and large scale habitat projects across the Council landholding. Make a record of each project in the biodiversity reporting spreadsheet. • Review and update the Bee Friendly campaign, employing a science-based approach to establish the right seed mix in the right location. • Continue to positively manage all statutory designated sites and aim to increase the number non-statutory designated sites under positive management. • Continue annual meadow management and investigate opportunities to create additional wildflower meadows across the city. • Seek funding opportunities to deliver additional habitat improvement works across the Council landholding. • Continue to review, update, and apply learnings from the WildNG project. Seek opportunities to expand beyond Sherwood.



		• Scope additional sites that could become designated as LNR or LWS. Assess and bring forward into designation if deemed appropriate.
2. Embed biodiversity into all Council services, policies, and decision making through strategy, policy, and plans	The Council has worked in-line with the following strategies and policies, achieving gains for biodiversity (as described in more detail in Section 1): • The Nottingham City Local Plan Part 1: Aligned Core Strategies 2014 (Broxtowe Borough, Gedling Borough, Nottingham City). • The Nottingham City Local Plan Part 2: Land and Planning Policies Development Plan 2020. • Greener, Healthier, Happier Strategy. • Biodiversity Supplementary Planning document 2020. • Urban Forest Strategy (2013). • Supplementary Planning Guidance Document: Trees on Development Sites (2012). • The Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. • Design Quality Framework.	• Continue to be involved in discussions regarding the review and update of The Local Plan 2026, to ensure that biodiversity is appropriately represented. • Update the biodiversity guidance as an informal document and/or a web-based applicant support system. • Produce an additional biodiversity guidance document for internal use, to formalise processes and aid understanding of biodiversity expectations within the Council. • Update the Urban Forest Strategy. • Produce a Blue-Green Infrastructure strategy to inform the inclusion and protection of this type of infrastructure going forwards. • Continue to commit and work towards reducing the Council's carbon footprint as part of the Local Plan.
3. Recognise biodiversity within planning and developments, including the	• Biodiversity Net Gain LPA Readiness Checklist followed.	• Continue to implement BNG on all applicable developments going forwards.



requirement to fulfil statutory duty regarding Biodiversity Net Gain	• BNG implemented for all non-exempt developments since February 2024. • Response provided for the consultation: Improving the implementation of biodiversity net gain for minor, medium, and brownfield developments. • Nottingham's most valuable and veteran trees/woodland protected from developments and maintained through Tree Preservation Orders (TPO). • Designated and non-designated wildlife sites and land mapped as part of the Open Space Network have been protected and maintained as a result of planning policy. • Biodiversity enhancements outside of the expectations of BNG e.g., bat boxes, bird boxes, included on all appropriate developments as a result of suitably worded planning conditions. • Recruited a second Biodiversity and Policy Officer in light of increased resource need around BNG. • Commissioned a report to identify BNG unit demand in the city (FPCR report) and began exploring the Council's potential to become a habitat bank unit provider. This has included researching potential banking sites and their financial viability for this purpose.	• Continue to stay up to date on Government changes to BNG legislation and all other relevant legislation. • Continue to upskill staff in BNG practices through training events, webinars, and conferences. • Continue to review trees and woodland across the city, update mapping as and when data is revised, and consider additional trees/woodland that can be imposed with TPOs. • Continue to protect wildlife sites and the Open Space Network as part of planning policy. • Seek the inclusion of more data layers in the Council's internal mapping system (NOMAD) to better inform planning application responses regarding biodiversity. • Continue to appraise the viability of becoming a registered provider of biodiversity units. • Continue to socialise and promote this work with wider colleagues for the purpose of adoption. • Continue to utilise Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping data to inform strategic significance in the BNG metric and advise habitat
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		creation/enhancement opportunities for developments.
4. Improve our knowledge and monitoring of biodiversity	• Began an assessment into the Open Space Network to seek more accurate modelling data. • Began an assessment of all conservation sites across the Council's landholding, to identify a priority system for creating updated management plans/briefs. • Commissioned a report (The Open and Green Space Quality Audit 2021) to inform a new strategic framework that highlights the importance of green spaces and enhancing biodiversity. • Commissioned a Biodiversity Opportunity Mapping exercise of the city to identify biodiversity opportunities across the city (Ecosulis).	• Continue to work with colleagues in the planning and GIS departments to identify additional data layers and methods of improving current data, to better inform our practices, policies, strategies, and projects. • Work towards producing updated management plans/briefs for all LWS sites and any sites that are not currently designated but are managed positively for biodiversity. • Identify all habitat management/improvement priorities for each of our nature sites. Review annually. Use this to amend the ranger workplan and to inform funding bid opportunities. • Explore options to survey our conservation sites to provide baseline habitat condition assessments. This data will help to inform habitat improvement works and provide a baseline measurement to quantify biodiversity uplift post-intervention. • Continue to investigate data gathering and monitoring opportunities e.g., mapping relaxed mowing areas across the city, and the inclusion of specific species population data as a GIS layer.



5. Work in partnership with others on joint projects, initiatives, and strategies	• Worked in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council and numerous other stakeholders to bring the LNRS into adoption. • Worked with statutory/charity/NGO partners such as the Environment Agency, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, and neighbouring LPAs on various joint projects, initiatives, and strategies. • Active in several working/steering groups related to biodiversity: the Nottingham Biodiversity Action Group Steering and Working Groups, the LNRS Advisory Group, the Planning, BNG, and LNRS Working Group, the Love Your Leen Working Group, and Nottingham Open Spaces Forum (NOSF). • Supported local Friends of Groups and NOSF to help deliver habitat improvement projects. • Lead on the Open and Green Spaces Champions Group, bringing together a range of Nottingham-based stakeholders to discuss biodiversity actions. • Contributed to the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) Nature and Biodiversity Taskforce, promoting nature-based solutions, championing nature recovery, unlocking funding for nature, and reconnecting	• Continue to work alongside Nottinghamshire County Council to provide ongoing delivery of the LNRS now adopted. • Continue to work with statutory partners to bring forward new strategies and projects regarding biodiversity. • Continue to participate in working/steering groups. • Continue to support Friends of Groups and other communities working to improve green spaces. • Seek funding opportunities that will promote joint working with partners who have shared goals and ambitions. • Continue to lead on the Open and Green Spaces Champions group to share learnings and discuss action points. • Continue to contribute to the EMCCA Nature and Biodiversity Taskforce.
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	people with nature, at a combined county/subregional level.	
6. Inform, educate, and raise awareness of biodiversity	• Ongoing – running the Green Guardians volunteering programme, engaging the community with nature through habitat improvement and horticulture activities across the city. • Attendance at a variety of events to promote the Green Guardians and biodiversity in general. • Provision of advice to a range of stakeholders and communities, under a range of circumstances e.g., habitat creation advice for schools, wildlife legislation advice for homeowners, presentations to various groups on BNG.	• Continue running the Green Guardians volunteering programme. Additional Volunteer and Tree Planting Co-ordinator has increased capacity, dedicating more time and resource to this area. • Continue seeking and attending events to educate and engage the public. • Continue to provide advice both internally and externally as needed. • Create a plan to improve nature reserve signage and entranceways to bolster public perception and engagement with our nature sites.
7. Invest in staff development and upskilling around biodiversity	• Completed a successful recruitment campaign to bring the Greenspace and Natural Environment Department more resource for nature recovery. • Invested budget into training staff around BNG.	• Continue to send staff to relevant training events to increase knowledge and skills in biodiversity. • Continue to internally socialise our programme of biodiversity across all service areas.



Section 3: Biodiversity Net Gain

Preparing for BNG

Nottingham City Council carried out a set of actions to ensure readiness for BNG legislation before it came into force in February 2024. See above section 'preparing for BNG'.

Compliance with BNG

Nottingham City Council has been complying with BNG legislation since it came into force in February 2024.

In-line with DEFRA guidance [Biodiversity net gain: what local planning authorities should do - GOV.UK](#) the Council has met the following obligations that are outlined within this online document:

Obligation	Actions Taken
Check that all the mandatory information is submitted alongside planning applications for development that are subject to the BNG condition.	The Biodiversity and Policy Officer is employed to check all this information.
Check and review metric calculations that are submitted alongside planning applications that are subject to the BNG condition.	The Biodiversity and Policy Officer is employed to check all this information.
Check and review habitat survey information that is submitted alongside planning applications that are subject to the BNG condition.	The Biodiversity and Policy Officer is employed to check all this information.
Check that information is correct before entering into a legal agreement.	The Biodiversity and Policy Officer is employed to check that all habitat and metric information is correct.
Work with developers to help them buy statutory credits where needed.	The Biodiversity and Policy Officer is employed to advise on statutory credit purchase.
Review Biodiversity Gain Plans and ensure that accompanying information e.g., final metric is accurate and acceptable.	The Biodiversity and Policy Officer is employed to check all this information.
Check that offsite gains are correctly registered and recorded.	The Biodiversity and Policy Officer is employed to check all this information.
Approve the Biodiversity Gain Plan within 8 weeks.	The Biodiversity and Policy Officer is employed to check the gain plan and advise that approval can go ahead.



	The planning team work to approve the Biodiversity Gain Plan in a timely manner in-line with the 8 weeks target.
In cases where Nottingham City Council is party to the legal agreement that secures BNG, ensure that monitoring is complete. Take enforcement actions if not.	The Biodiversity and Policy Officer is employed to check HMMP information and future monitoring reports. Information and Monitoring post created to monitor compliance with legal agreements and to employ enforcement action when compliance has not been followed. Active recruitment for this post ongoing.
Set local policies to support BNG.	A Supplementary Planning Document has already been published for biodiversity. Updates to this document will be produced within an separate, informal guidance document and/or web-based applicant support system. Internal biodiversity updates will be socialised via an additional, internal biodiversity guidance document(s) as appropriate. A new Local Plan will be prepared shortly, and current planning policies on biodiversity will be reviewed and updated in line with legislation and to reflect local objectives relating to biodiversity.

Details of BNG resulting from Biodiversity Gain Plans

As of February 2024, when BNG came into force, the following developments have been approved and have Biodiversity Gain Plans that will result in net gain:

Planning Application Reference No.	% net gain post-development (area habitat)	% net gain post-development (hedgerow)	% net gain post-development (watercourse)	Comments
25/00167/PDS4	40.09%	0%	?%	0.04 watercourse units are being provided via statutory credits (reference BNGCRD-2CLTV-AL5LU). Proof of purchase has been provided, the metric requires



				updating with these credits in the offsite watercourse creation tab to determine exact % net gain.
25/01052/PDS4	17.77%	0%	13.54%	0.03 watercourse units provided by habitat bank (reference BGS-111024001). Updated metric requires submitting to the public planning portal.

Plan to meet BNG obligations for the next reporting period

All actions listed in the above table will continue to be implemented across the next reporting period. In addition to this, the following objectives will be included in the plan:

Actions for the next reporting period
Continue to work within the LNRS advisory group to monitor how the LNRS is being applied across the city/county. Utilise the spatial data and mapping measures in the planning process now that the LNRS has been adopted.
Continue to consider BNG in strategies priorities, and objectives
Update biodiversity guidance/web based applicant support to contain all relevant BNG information and updates to policy.
Liaise with colleagues to ensure that BNG is represented in the Local Plan update.
Continue to appraise the viability of becoming a registered provider of biodiversity units.
Continue to keep other departments, including the planning committee, abreast of BNG updates and legislation changes, offer training where appropriate.
Recruit for the position of Information and Monitoring Officer to bolster resource in BNG monitoring and enforcement.
Formalise the administration process for BNG monitoring, including a tracking system.
Double current Biodiversity Officer resource to implement BNG requirements.
Create a validation checklist for the planning system process, including BNG requirements.

Using Council land as a habitat bank

Nottingham City Council has been investigating the potential of some of its landholdings to become a BNG unit provider. We have been scoping the viability of a handful of sites that were shortlisted as a result of a piece of work commissioned by FPCR (see Section 1 for more details). We have now further refined this list and are focusing on one site that is most likely to be viable for this purpose. Financial modelling has been carried out and we are in the process of socialising the work with the wider Council to scope next steps.



Nottingham
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